

MAKING TOYS FOR KIDDIES, OLD MEN STAVE OFF POOR FARM AND END DAYS AMID CHILDISH SPATS



The Old Men of the Toy Shop Making Animal Toys for Children.

BY B. J. O'DONNELL

New York, Dec. 19.—Come with me for a Christmas visit to the Old Men's Toy Shop down on Mott street and I'll show you the close relationship that exists between the First and Seventh age of Man!

Here, in an old building where the children of the lower east side once were instructed in the three R's, more than 40 men past the prescribed three score years and ten are making Christmas toys so they won't have to go to the poor farm.

The Old Men's Toy Shop is a port in which many human vessels, battered and torn on life's voyage, are seeking refuge from bitter winter winds. Here the world's oddest Christmas toys are being made.

The old men of the toy shop are a strange crowd. Too old to do a man's work, too proud to solicit charity, ambitious unto the end, they

come to pass the evening of their lives making playthings for children. They earn 60 cents a day.

There's "The Captain," who for 40 years piloted ships from the seven seas into the New York harbor. The captain is 75 now.

Next to him sits "Brownie," who boasts of a romantic past before the footlights. Of course, he will tell you, he was not a star, but well he remembers the days and nights when he was one of the jury in "The Legend of Leonora," when Maude Adams played the lead.

"I shook hands with Miss Adams one night!" Brownie will tell you, proudly, as he puffs spots on the wooden leopards that are passed to him by "The Professor."

"The Professor" is a book worm. And because he is and always has been a book-worm, the professor is one of the old men of the toy shop. When he was younger and able to do a full day's work in the little book